

## Message Text

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ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 DEAE-00 CIAE-00 INR-05 IO-10 JUSE-00

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FM AMEMBASSY RANGOON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8871

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMCONSUL CHIANG MAI

USMISSION GENEVA

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 3 RANGOON 3381

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SNAR BM TH LA HK XC UNFDAC

SUBJ: REPORT OF TRI-COUNTRY NARCOTICS CONFERENCE

BEGIN SUMMARY

1. TRI-COUNTRY NARCOTICS CONFERENCE NOTED CONTINUING PROGRESS IN MOST RESPECTS, BUT DISCUSSIONS EMPHASIZED LONG-RANGE NATURE OF PROBLEM AND UNLIKELIHOOD THAT MAJOR SHORT-TERM REDUCTION IN TRAFFICKING CAN BE EFFECTED. THERE WAS AGREEMENT THAT DEVELOPMENT OF COMMITMENTS BY HOST GOVERNMENTS TO NARCOTICS CONTROL, EVEN IN ABSENCE OF U.S. INPUTS, IS IN LONG RUN MORE IMPORTANT THAN MEASURES TAKEN HALF-HEARTEDLY IN RESPONSE TO USG URGING. AT SAME TIME, MUCH OF DISCUSSION FOCUSED ON NEED FOR USG TO BE OR TO APPEAR RESPONSIVE TO NARCOTICS CONCERNS OF SEA GOVERNMENTS IN ORDER TO ENSURE CONTINUED COOPERATION OF THOSE GOVERNMENTS ON ASPECTS OF TRAFFICKING OF CONCERN TO US. ASSISTANCE WITH INCOME SUBSTITUTION AND TREATMENT PROJECTS, AND EFFORTS TO CONTROL ARMS SMUGGLING ARE EXAMPLES. THE IMPORTANCE OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CHANGE IN GROWING AREAS, INDUCED BY PROJECTS OF WIDER SCOPE THAN NARCOTICS CONTROL, WAS ALSO STRESSED. END SUMMARY.

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2. REPRESENTATIVES OF AMEMBASSIES BANGKOK, RANGOON, VIENTIANE, AND AMCONSULS HONG KONG AND CHIANG MAI MET IN RANGOON NOV 20-22 TO DISCUSS NARCOTICS CONTROL IN TRI-BORDER AREA.

3. COUNTRY STATUS REPORTS -- BURMA. CONTINUING BURMESE COMMITMENT TO NARCOTICS CONTROL, NOTWITHSTANDING LIMITED EFFECTIVENESS DUE TO INSECURITY IN SHAN STATE, WAS DESCRIBED, ALONG WITH RESULTS OF RECENT UNFDAC VISIT. GROWING EVIDENCE OF BCP INVOLVEMENT INDICATES BCP IS PERMITTING OTHER TRAFFICKING ORGANIZATIONS TO BUY OPIUM IN ITS TERRITORY, AND POSSIBLY BEGINNING TO ENGAGE IN TRADE ITSELF. RECENT GUB RELEASE OF SEVERAL IMPORTANT TRAFFICKERS, AND EVIDENCE OF ATTEMPTS TO REORGANIZE SELF-DEFENSE FORCES (KKY) IN SOME AREAS (PERHAPS BY LOCAL ACCOMMODATIONS) IS A CAUSE FOR CONCERN AND WILL BE SUBJECT OF CONTINUING DETAILED ATTENTION, BUT THERE IS NO EVIDENCE THAT GUB INTENDS TO SLACKEN ITS NARCOTICS CONTROL EFFORTS. AT SAME TIME, OVERRIDING PRIORITY FOR GUB AS FOR ANY GOVERNMENT WILL BE NATIONAL SECURITY AND TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY WHICH ARE MORE SERIOUSLY THREATENED BY BCP AND KIA THAN BY SMALLER KKY TRAFFICKERS.

4. THAILAND. PRESENTATION STRESSED GROWING THAI AWARENESS OF PROBLEMS, ENCOURAGING PROGRESS IN EFFECTIVENESS OF THAI POLICE WHICH ACCOUNTS FOR GROWING PROPORTION OF SEIZURES, PROMPT WASHINGTON SUPPORT TO NARCOTICS PROGRAMS IN THAILAND, CONTINUED GROWTH OF THE UNFDAC CROP SUBSTITUTION PROGRAM UNDER THE ENERGETIC LEADERSHIP OF DICK MANN IN CHIANG MAI, AND THE SUBMISSION TO WASHINGTON OF A PROPOSED DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRAM TO COMPLEMENT THE UN EFFORT. LESS ENCOURAGING DEVELOPMENTS INCLUDED POSSIBLE INCREASES IN OPIUM PLANTING DUE TO PRICE INCREASES, FACT THAT SEIZURES ARE STILL ACCOUNTING FOR ONLY A SMALL FRACTION OF FLOW THROUGH THAILAND, AND CONTINUING PROBLEMS OF CORRUPTION. EFFECTIVE INCOME SUBSTITUTION EFFORTS WILL REQUIRE LONG-TERM ZONAL DEVELOPMENT ADDRESSED TO ALL ASPECTS OF GROWING AREAS' ECONOMY AND SOCIAL STRUCTURE. WE EXPECT GENERAL CONTINUITY OF THAI POLICY AFTER ELECTIONS, BUT THE ELECTIONS THEMSELVES WILL HAMPER RTG DECISION MAKING IN NEXT FEW MONTHS, AND THAI SENSITIVITIES TO APPEARANCE OR REALITY OF EXCESSIVE U.S. PRESSURE OR PRESENCE CAN BE EXPECTED TO CONTINUE TO GROW.

5. LAOS. LAOS REMAINS A MINOR PARTICIPANT IN THE INTERNATIONAL NARCOTICS TRAFFIC AND A NET IMPORTER OF OPIUM TO MEET DOMESTIC

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CONSUMER NEEDS. RLG CONTINUES TO COOPERATE WILL AT WORKING LEVEL IN NARCOTICS EFFORTS, BUT ATTITUDDROF PATHET LAO SIDE REMAINS A QUESTION MARK. GROUPE SPECIALE D'INVESTIGATION IS BEING DISBANDED WITH U.S. BLESSINGS AND GSI NARCOTICS ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS ARE BEING RETURNED TO THEIR PARENT AGENCIES (POLICE, CUSTOMS, MILITARY POLICE). THE LAO ARE PREOCCUPIED WITH INTERNAL POLITICS AND WE ANTICIPATE NO SIGNIFICANT CHANGE IN LAO ATTITUDES TOWARD COOPERATION IN THE ANTI-NARCOTICS EFFORT. PROPOSED UNFDAC PROGRAM IS IN LIMBO FOLLOW-

ING RLG'S GENERAL RELUCTANCE TO ACCEPT ADDITIONAL FOREIGN EXPERTS. CONSTRUCTION OF NEW DETOXIFICATION CENTER IS EXPECTED TO BEGIN IN EARLY 1975. ENFORCEMENT SUCCESSES IN ARRESTS AND SEIZURES CONTINUE TO BE PARTLY VITIATED BY FAILURE OF JUDICIAL SYSTEM TO EFFECT PROSECUTIONS AND CONVICTIONS. CROP SUBSTITUTION EFFORTS ARE PROGRESSING WITH GOOD COOPERATION BETWEEN UN PROJECT, THAILAND AND PHA PHA SING PROJECT IN LAOS. BOTH CROP SUBSTITUTION AND ADDICT REHABILITATION EFFORTS ARE LONG TERM, BUT REMAIN QUID PRO QUO EXPECTED BY LAO FOR THEIR COOPERATION IN THE ENFORCEMENT FIELD.

6. HONG KONG. HKG HAS HAD MAJOR ENFORCEMENT SUCCESSES FOLLOWING REORGANIZATION OF POLICE NARCOTICS BUREAU AND USE OF CONSPIRACY LAW AGAINST SYNDICATES. THREE OF SIX MAJOR SYNDICATES BELIEVED TO HAVE BEEN NEUTRALIZED AND ACTION AGAINST TWO MORE IS IMMINENT. LARGE SEIZURES HAVE BEEN MADE INCLUDING ACETIC ANHYDRIDE CLANDESTINELY MANUFACTURED IN HONG KONG. ON TREATMENT AND REHABILITATION, MAJOR EMPHASIS IS ON EXPANSION OF METHADONE MAINTENANCE PROGRAM TO LEVEL CAPABLE OF HANDLING SOME 30,000 CASES WITHIN A TWO-YEAR FRAMEWORK. THE PRIMARY GOAL IS TO DISRUPT TRAFFICKING PATTERNS TO H.K.'S NARCOTICS CONSUMER MARKET.

7. ARMS TRAFFIC. CONFEREES DISCUSSED THE SMUGGLING PROBLEM OF ARMS AND AMMUNITION, MAINLY OF U.S. MANUFACTURE AND SUPPLIED UNDER MILITARY AID PROGRAMS, INTO THE HANDS OF BURMESE DISSIDENTS, INCLUDING SOME TRAFFICKING GROUPS. BURMESE AUTHORITIES CONTINUE TO INDICATE A FEELING THAT THE U.S. SHOULD BE ABLE TO EXERT GREATER RESTRAINING FORCE ON THIS ARMS TRAFFIC, AND USG ATTEMPTS, EVEN COSMETIC, TO DO SO WOULD ADVANCE OUR NARCOTICS CONTROL INTERESTS IN BURMA. IT WAS NOTED THAT AS FIRST STEP TOWARD IMPROVED ACCOUNTABILITY FOR SUCH WEAPONS IT IS NOW POSSIBLE TO TRACE BY SERIAL NUMBER WEAPONS SHIPPED AFTER JANUARY 1974. IT WAS RECOGNIZED THAT ALTHOUGH THE RTG HAS MADE SIGNIFICANT ARMS SEIZURES, THE DIFFICULTIES INVOLVED IN ENFORCEMENT ARE SUCH THAT THERE IS

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LITTLE HOPE OF CUTTING BACK THE SMUGGLING LEVEL SIGNIFICANTLY AS LONG AS THE DEMAND EXISTS. IT WAS AGREED THAT THERE IS NO ADEQUATE INTELLIGENCE ON THE VOLUME OF ARMS TRAFFIC ACROSS THAILAND AND THAT INFORMATION ON THIS GENERAL SUBJECT SHOULD BE MORE EXTENSIVELY EXCHANGED AMONG MISSIONS.

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AMCONSUL HONG KONG

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8. CULTIVATION ESTIMATES. THERE ARE INDICATIONS OF INCREASED OPIUM PLANTING DURING CURRENT SEASON DUE TO HIGHER PRICES AND FAVORABLE WEATHER CONDITIONS. BEST AVAILABLE ESTIMATES FOR BURMA ARE WITHIN RANGE OF 320-510 TONS, WITH 75 PERCENT COMING FROM NORTHERN SHAN STATE. PRODUCTION IN NORTH THAILAND IS ESTIMATED TO INCREASE BY ABOUT 25 PERCENT THIS YEAR. PRODUCTION IN LAOS WAS ESTIMATED AT 40 TONS LAST YEAR AND THERE IS THE POSSIBILITY OF A SLIGHT INCREASE IN 1975. CONFEREES AGREED THAT A MAJOR CUT IN PRODUCTION LIES WELL IN THE FUTURE, PARTLY BECAUSE IMPROVED ENFORCEMENT MEASURES AND PROGRESS ON INCOME SUBSTITUTION MERELY TEND TO DRIVE UP PRICES AND ENCOURAGE MORE INTENSIVE CULTIVATION ELSEWHERE, A TREND ALREADY NOTICEABLE IN THAILAND. THOSE ATTENDING WERE UNCERTAIN WHETHER ANY ATTEMPTS HAVE YET BEEN MADE TO DETERMINE ACREAGE UNDER CULTIVATION FROM ERTS IMAGERY; IF NOT, EFFORTS SHOULD BE MADE TO EXPLOIT THIS POTENTIAL SOURCE OF INFORMATION.

9. TRAFFICKING TRENDS. DEA REPRESENTATIVES REPORTED FOLLOWING SIGNIFICANT NEW DEVELOPMENTS AND TRENDS: (A) PROGRESS IN HONG KONG TOWARD NEUTRALIZATION OF MAJOR SYNDICATES; (B) INCREASED NUMBER OF COURIER SHIPMENTS OF #3 AND #4 HEROIN FROM SOUTHEAST ASIAN POINTS TO WESTERN EUROPE (BRUSSELS, AMSTERDAM, PARIS), THOUGH AMOUNTS CONFIDENTIAL

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INVOLVED REMAIN MODEST AND PROBABLY FOR CONSUMPTION IN EUROPE RATHER THAN TRANSSHIPMENT TO U.S.; (C) RECENT SEIZURES OF HASHISH OIL LABORATORIES IN BANGKOK AND VIENTIANE; MORE HASHISH OIL PRODUCTION CAN BE EXPECTED IN FUTURE; (D) CONTINUING PROBLEMS OF THAI

TRAWLER SHIPMENTS TO HONG KONG; (E) SIGNIFICANT TRAFFIC IN AMPHETAMINES IN THAILAND. THERE WAS GENERAL AGREEMENT THAT CONTINUING IMPROVEMENT IN INTELLIGENCE IS MOST IMPORTANT FACTOR IN IMPROVING NARCOTICS ENFORCEMENT. UNDERSTANDING OF CONFEREES IS THAT NARCOTICS OF SEA ORIGIN STILL REPRESENT A RELATIVELY SMALL PORTION OF TOTAL SHIPMENTS REACHING U.S., AND IT WAS RECOGNIZED THAT IN SPITE OF POTENTIAL THREAT OF INCREASED SHIPMENTS FROM SEA THE PRIMARY U.S. INTEREST IN NARCOTICS CONTROL IS IN MORE IMPORTANT SOURCES.

10. TRAFFICKING ORGANIZATION. IN BURMA, KIA, LOIMAW KKY, AND 3RD CIF CONTINUE TO BE MOST IMPORTANT SUCH ORGANIZATIONS, MAKING INCREASED USE OF MAN-PACKING AND REFINING OPIUM TO MORPHINE BASE FARTHER NORTH. ALTHOUGH CONTINUED BURMESE ENFORCEMENT ACTION AND IMPROVED CAPABILITIES FOLLOWING ARRIVAL OF USG-PROVIDED HELICOPTERS SHOULD HAVE SOME EFFECT, IT WAS AGREED THAT NO MAJOR REDUCTION IN VOLUME OF NARCOTICS REACHING THAI BORDER CAN REALISTICALLY BE EXPECTED IN FORESEEABLE FUTURE. A PREREQUISITE FOR SUCH A REDUCTION WOULD BE GREATLY IMPROVED GUB CONTROL AND ADMINISTRATION OF SHAN STATE.

11. INCOME SUBSTITUTION. CONFEREES AGREED THAT ENFORCEMENT AND INCOME SUBSTITUTION MUST MOVE AHEAD TOGETHER. THEY EMPHASIZED THAT EFFECTIVE REDUCTION OF CULTIVATION THROUGH INCOME SUBSTITUTION WILL REQUIRE LONG-TERM ATTENTION TO ALL ASPECTS OF OPIUM GROWERS' SOCIO-ECONOMIC SYSTEM, OFTEN ON A BASIS OF COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENT OF A WATERSHED OR OTHER MANAGEABLE GEOGRAPHIC AREA. IT WAS FURTHER AGREED THAT MISSIONS REPRESENTED AT THE CONFERENCE WILL EXCHANGE INFORMATION ON INCOME SUBSTITUTION EFFORTS.

12. PROCUREMENT. PROBLEM OF LONG DELIVERY TIMES AND PRICE INCREASES FOR ITEMS IN USG NARCOTICS CONTROL PROGRAMS IN THAILAND AND LAOS WAS DISCUSSED. OFFSHORE PROCUREMENT WILL BE NECESSARY IN SOME CASES FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF PROJECTS WITHOUT UNACCEPTABLE DELAYS OR EXORBITANT COSTS, AND SOME CONFEREES SUGGESTED A BLANKET WAIVER AUTHORIZING OFFSHORE PROCUREMENT FOR SECTION 482 PROJECTS. OTHERS DOUBTED THE NECESSITY OF SUCH A WAIVER EXCEPT IN SPECIFIC CASES.

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13. REGIONAL AND MULTILATERAL COOPERATION. THE CONFERENCE NOTED THE PARADOX OF CLOSE COOPERATION AMONG NARCOTICS TRAFFICKERS BUT NOT AMONG SOUTHEAST ASIAN GOVERNMENTS SEEKING TO REPRESS THE TRAFFIC. THERE WAS AGREEMENT THAT THE UN SYSTEM CAN PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN BRINGING ABOUT CLOSER COOPERATION, AND THAT THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF RECENT UN-SPONSORED CONFERENCE OF ENFORCEMENT OFFICIALS IN BANGKOK CONSTITUTED USEFUL FIRST STEP. DISCUSSION CENTERED ON THAT CONFERENCE'S RECOMMENDATION FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF A REGIONAL UN NARCOTICS LIAISON OFFICER. THERE WAS A CONSENSUS THAT THE USG SHOULD USE ITS UTFLUENCE TO PROMOTE THE APPOINT-

MENT OF AN EFFECTIVE INDIVIDUAL --"A SELF-STARTER"-- TO THIS POST, BUT NEITHER THE THAI NOR MALAYSIAN CANDIDATES WHO HAVE BEEN PUT FORWARD MEETS THESE SPECIFICATIONS. THERE WAS ALSO AGREEMENT THAT THE USG SHOULD ENCOURAGE A STRICT DEFINITION OF THE LIAISON OFFICER'S DUTIES, WITH A VIEW TO AVOIDING BUREAUCRATIC PROLIFERATION. SOME CONCERN WAS EXPRESSED OVER DUPLICATION OF EFFORT IN FIELD OF REGIONAL COOPERATION, AND IN THIS CONTEXT IT WAS AGREED THAT COLOMBO PLAN NARCOTICS ADVISOR SERVES NO USEFUL PURPOSE AND THAT USG SHOULD SUPPORT TERMINATION OF THIS PROGRAM. THERE WAS ALSO CONSENSUS THAT PROPOSED ASEAN DECLARATION ON DRUGS MIGHT BE HELPFUL AS STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLE BUT THAT THERE WOULD BE NO ADVANTAGE IN ASEAN OPERATIONAL INVOLVEMENT IN NARCOTICS CONTROL.

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14. THERE WAS ALSO DISCUSSION OF HOW BURMESE PARTICIPATION IN REGIONAL COOPERATION MIGHT BE ENCOURAGED. EMB RANGOON REPRESENTATIVES NOTED THAT BURMESE NON-PARTICIPATION IN REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS AND OTHER EFFORTS AT COOPERATION IS LARGELY FOR PRAGMATIC REASONS, A FEELING THAT TALK SESSIONS ARE A WASTE OF TIME; SHORTAGE OF TRAVEL FUNDS AND OF OFFICIALS WHO CAN BE SPARED FROM THEIR DESKS LONG ENOUGH TO ATTEND MEETINGS; AND FEAR OF LEAKS IF INTELLIGENCE IS EXCHANGED WITH OTHER COUNTRIES IN REGION. MOST EFFECTIVE MEANS OF SECURING BURMESE PARTICIPATION

WILL BE DEMONSTRATION THAT COOPERATIVE MACHINERY ACTUALLY WORKS  
AND HAS SOMETHING TO OFFER GUB.

15. BILATERAL COOPERATION. CONFEREES NOTED GROWING TENDENCY  
TOWARD BILATERAL COOPERATION AND EXCHANGES OF INFORMATION INVOLVING  
COUNTRIES WITHIN AND OUTSIDE REGION. FOR EXAMPLE, CANADA HAS  
STATIONED POLICE OFFICER IN HONG KONG; HONG KONG GOVERNMENT IS  
URGING SINGAPORE TO DO LIKEWISE; AUSTRALIA HAS ASKED ITS EMBASSIES  
IN REGION TO SUGGEST POSSIBLE NARCOTICS-RELATED AID PROJECTS;  
WEST GERMAN EMBASSY RANGOON EXPECTS REQUEST TO SUPPLEMENT UNFDAC  
FUNDING OF NARCOTICS CONTROL PROJECTS. IT WAS AGREED THAT THE  
STATIONING OF A YVGZZQLLYS HYL# POLICE OFFICIAL IN BANGKOK,  
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WITH REGIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES, HAS BEEN VALUABLE BOTH FOR LIAISON  
PURPOSES AND AS DEMONSTRATION OF BRITISH/HKG INTEREST IN PROBLEM  
OF AREA.

LACEY

NOTE BY OC/T: #AS RECEIVED, CORRECTION TO FOLLOW.

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